

MEMORANDUM

JUNE 27, 1985

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
AND STEPHEN COYLE, DIRECTOR

FROM: SUSAN ALLEN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN DESIGN
MITCHELL FISCHMAN, SENIOR PROJECT COORDINATOR
FOR THE BACK BAY

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING WITH THE ST. JAMES AVENUE GARAGE
CIVIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION OF THE BACK BAY AND THE 500 BOYLSTON
STREET REDEVELOPERS

On March 28, 1985, the Board approved the PDA/DIPP application for 500 Boylston Street with the stipulation that a comprehensive traffic study of the Back Bay be carried out by the City's Commissioner of Traffic and Parking. The initial report of the Back Bay Traffic Study was released on June 13, 1985 and was released to the community "Working Committee" for the Traffic Report, which includes representations as well as the St. James Avenue Garage Civic Advisory Committee (an attached memorandum from Alfred Howard outlines the status of the Back Bay Traffic Study and summary findings of the Initial Report).

As you know, traffic and parking remain as a critical concern to the Back Bay neighborhood, and specifically to the St. James Avenue Garage Civic Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB). In addition, the Authority staff has met with the Redevelopers of 500 Boylston Street and they understand the City's commitment to resolving these issues and Lisa Chapnick, the Traffic and Parking Commissioner, has indicated her intention to take practical action to implement the recommendations of the Back Bay Traffic Study.

We are also pleased to report the willingness of the 500 Boylston Street Redevelopers to make available up to \$50,000 to the Authority for the Back Bay Neighborhood to implement those final traffic recommendations.

We seek to formalize those arrangements involving the 500 Boylston Street Redevelopers, the St. James Avenue Garage CAC and NABB with regard to implementation of final traffic recommendations for the Back Bay Neighborhood.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE
ST. JAMES AVENUE GARAGE CIVIC ADVISORY
COMMITTEE, THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
OF THE BACK BAY AND THE
500 BOYLSTON STREET REDEVELOPERS**

We, therefore, request authorization for the Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the St. James Avenue Garage Civic Advisory Committee, the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, and the 500 Boylston Street Redevelopers with regard to implementation of final traffic recommendations for the Back Bay Neighborhood, substantially in accordance with the attached form.

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the St. James Avenue Garage Civic Advisory Committee, the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, and the 500 Boylston Street Redevelopers with regard to implementation of final traffic recommendations for the Back Bay neighborhood, substantially in accordance with the attached form.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Let it be known that on this _____ day of June, 1985, the undersigned the St. James Avenue Garage Civic Advisory Committee ("CAC"), the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay ("NABB"), the 500 Boylston Street Joint Venture of New England Mutual Life Insurance Company and Gerald D. Hines Interests Inc. ("NEL/Hines"), and the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") hereby agree as follows:

1. The BRA, as the City's Planning Agency, will act in a good faith manner with the City of Boston's Traffic and Parking Department, and with other public agencies, Boards and Commissions related to resolution of traffic and parking management issues in the Back Bay and work toward identification of a reasonable Traffic & Parking Management Plan. Such issues include, but are not limited to, reduction of traffic volumes on Berkeley Street between Newbury Street and Storrow Drive, overall reduction in the level of traffic in the area by the time 500 Boylston Street is occupied, improving vehicular access to the Southeast Expressway and the Central Artery, and mitigation measures such as incentives for ride-sharing programs, variable (flexible) work hours and the encouragement of public transit. The BRA will recommend to the Chairman of the Zoning Commission that a vote not be made on the petition by the owners of 500 Boylston Street for approval of its Planned Development Area Designation until such time as the Report of the Back Bay Traffic Study is completed. (Completion of the Report is anticipated no later than August 13, 1985).
2. NEL/Hines agrees to provide a Parking Management Plan for the 500 Boylston Street Project which sets forth a commitment for practical implementation of mitigation measures including those aimed at encouraging public transit, ride-sharing programs, and variable (flexible) work hours. Such plan will include an increase in availability of public parking spaces, if total spaces provided exceed 1,000 spaces, based on the ratio that for every ten (10) new spaces, 2.5 space must be utilized for public short-term parking (and not reserved for tenant or leased monthly spaces).

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

3. NEL/Hines agrees to fund the BRA in an amount not to exceed \$50,000, for additional work as specified by the BRA, in cooperation with the Traffic and Parking Department, related to implementation of final traffic recommendations for the Back Bay neighborhood.
4. CAC and NABB independently agree to cooperate in good faith with the BRA on establishment of a Back Bay Traffic Management Plan. CAC and NABB also agree that implementation of such Plan may require additional public meetings over the next few months.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement in five counterparts to be duly executed under seal as of the date first above written. Failure of any of the five parties to sign this Agreement shall make such Agreement null and void.

Approved As To Form:

Assistant General Counsel
Boston Redevelopment Authority

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

By _____
Director

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
OF THE BACK BAY

By _____

ST. JAMES AVENUE
GARAGE CIVIC ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

By _____

NEW ENGLAND MUTUAL LIFE
INSURANCE COMPANY

By _____

GERALD D. HINES INTERESTS INC.

By _____

MEMORANDUM

JUNE 26, 1985

TO: STEPHEN COYLE, DIRECTOR

FROM: ALFRED HOWARD, PLANNING DIRECTOR FOR TRANSPORTATION

SUBJECT: BACK BAY TRAFFIC STUDY

Introduction

On March 28th, the Board adopted the PDA/DIPP for 500 Boylston Street with the stipulation that a comprehensive traffic study of the Back Bay be carried out by the City's Commissioner of Traffic & Parking and that "the initial findings and recommendations be presented to the BRA and the (St. James Avenue Garage) CAC prior to consideration of the Final Developer Designation by the Boston Redevelopment Authority Board".

The Initial Report of The Back Bay Neighborhood Transportation and Traffic Engineering Study, undertaken by the Traffic & Parking Department pursuant to the BRA request of March 28, is a good first step in addressing transportation concerns in the Back Bay. It provides a consistent data base and gives preliminary attention to the three stated BRA goals of reducing traffic levels on Berkeley Street, in the area as a whole and seeking to strengthen vehicular access to the Central Artery/Southeast Expressway. The Report conveys a valid expectation of more documented results in the Final Report schedules for August. The Final Report will detail and expand matters identified in the Initial Report, particularly longer range measures, and respond to community and agency comments.

Initial Report Findings

Findings of the Initial Report were presented by the Consultant to the St. James Avenue Garage CAC on the evening of June 19 at a meeting which included attendance of Traffic & Parking Department and BRA staff.

The Report identifies encouragement of mass transit and ride-sharing as the most promising overall strategy to reduce areawide traffic impacts of 500 Boylston Street and other Back Bay developments. Traffic volumes, in the absence of mitigating measures, are predicted to increase 39% along Berkeley and 24% along Clarendon in the PM peak hour. 1985 counts are 5-10% above 1983/84 levels. The study also appropriately emphasizes improved parking restriction enforcement as vital to any successful program. It assesses alternative closures of Storrow Drive ramps at Berkeley and setting signals to delay traffic along Berkeley as means of reducing Berkeley traffic volumes.

As an indicator of the relative impact of 500 Boylston traffic generation, the Report shows that only around 6% of 1989 projected PM peak traffic on Berkeley Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street would be attributed to the proposed development. Closer to 500 Boylston, the relative contribution on Berkeley Street increases to just over 10% between St. James Avenue and Boylston Street.

Immediate actions proposed (for Traffic & Parking Department implementation) are:

- better signage toward MassPike entrances
- restricted parking to
 - extend right turn lane on Beacon at Arlington
 - allow right turn lane on Beacon at Berkeley
 - allow left turn lane from Mass Ave. at Huntington
- relocated cab stand at Arlington/Stuart to allow another through lane
- pedestrian phase in signals at Berkeley/Boylston

More problematic elements for the immediate term are:

- consolidate random loading zones
- encourage employer subsidies for MBTA passes
- provision of more short-term parking and better management

Other options that are studied and not excluded from longer-term consideration are:

- ban left turn from Charles southbound to Beacon
- pedestrian phases in signals at Boylston and Clarendon and Dartmouth
- increased commuter parking fees
- encouragement of flexible work hours

The transit reliance of the study is based mostly on MBTA improvements already programmed (more LRV's and improved track for the Green Line; new Orange Line) and general concepts of encouraging ride-sharing, subsidized MBTA passes and flexible work hours. The only new concept is for a shuttle bus service on Newbury and Boylston.

The report points to long-range improvements to the Herald Street corridor to create a more attractive and acceptable link to the Central Artery and Southeast Expressway, along with a recommendation to consider eastbound Turnpike access from Back Bay. The Herald Street corridor is currently receiving attention from BRA consultants in the context of possible air rights development.

Although not mentioned in the Initial Report, the proposed "down-zoning" of Boylston Street should help limit future traffic potential.

Outlook

BRA staff is working with the Traffic & Parking Department and the community to see that the Final Report gives greater quantitative perspective by identifying through-traffic and showing how changes in various factors effects the achievement of objectives. Overall, the outlook for a sound Final Report in August appears good.